United Nations S/PV.7604

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7604th meeting

Thursday, 14 January 2016, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Rosselli	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	Egypt	Mr. Kandeel
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Peace consolidation in West Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (S/2015/1012)

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16-00741 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace consolidation in West Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa (S/2015/1012)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/1012, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa.

I now give the floor to Mr. Chambas.

Mr. Chambas: I am pleased to be here today to brief the Security Council on the situation in West Africa and the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA). Further to the sixteenth report (S/2015/1012) of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa, which is before the Council, I would like to highlight a few issues and to update members on the most recent developments.

There were a number of key political developments in West Africa in the past six months. Peaceful and credible elections were held in several countries.

In Burkina Faso, the transitional institutions ensured the holding of the presidential and legislative elections in a timely manner, despite the challenges that emerged following the failed coup d'état of 16 September. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my congratulations to the people and the leaders of Burkina Faso for their exemplary conduct and peaceful and responsible participation during the polling. The inauguration of President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré marked a successful end to the transition period.

In Guinea, a dialogue process supported by the United Nations in coordination with regional and international actors enabled the holding of presidential elections in accordance with constitutional deadlines. The peaceful holding of the elections, which resulted in the re-election of President Alpha Condé, constitutes an important milestone in the country's process of democratic consolidation.

Peaceful elections were also conducted in Côte d'Ivoire, resulting in the re-election of the incumbent, President Alassane Ouattara.

With regard to Nigeria, I am encouraged by the establishment of a new Government and by its commitment to actively combating corruption. That will contribute to the creation of an environment that will allow the country to realize its full economic potential.

Those developments demonstrate the democratic resolve of the peoples of West Africa.

As Council members are aware, five presidential elections are scheduled to take place in 2016 — in Benin, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Ghana and the Niger. In the lead-up to those elections, I will continue to call on all national stakeholders to utilize dialogue to resolve outstanding elections-related issues so as to create a conducive environment for the holding of peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

Violent extremism and terrorist activities remain a major threat to security and development in West Africa, further aggravating the region's humanitarian challenges. While some progress has been made in the fight against Boko Haram, that terrorist group continues its indiscriminate attacks against civilians, not only in Nigeria but also in the Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Boko Haram continues to adapt its tactics and is increasingly resorting to using young boys and girls to engage in suicide attacks. In response, countries in the region have intensified their efforts to combat those terrorist tricks and have improved cooperation in areas such as intelligence-sharing.

As they conduct military operations against the group, it is critical that they maintain adherence to international human rights, humanitarian law and refugee law. It is also critical for countries of West and Central Africa to work on development strategies that address the root causes of the insurgency, notably the

underlying socioeconomic grievances of marginalized communities. In that regard, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bathily and I are working to ensure that the expected Lake Chad Basin Commission summit and the joint summits of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States take place as soon as possible.

There has also been some progress in the area of security sector reform (SSR). The new United Nations senior security reform adviser, who was recently appointed by the Secretary-General to support President Alpha Condé of Guinea in his efforts to advance the implementation of SSR, is already working intensely with the President and his Government. At the President's request, the technical follow-up commission and all five technical sector committees on SSR, led by the senior SSR adviser, have resumed the holding of regular meetings.

Concerning drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, in November I chaired a meeting of the high-level policy committee of the West Africa Coast Initiative. I was pleased to note the commitment of countries in the region to fight that scourge. Transnational organized crime units in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia have been conducting effective joint investigations, while the unit in Côte d'Ivoire is working to become operational shortly. Regrettably, progress has been slower in the area of maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. The interregional coordination centre in Yaoundé, inaugurated in September 2014, is still not fully operational, and the coordination centre covering Togo, Benin, the Niger and Nigeria has yet to receive staff, funding and equipment. We continue to urge all partners to intensify their cooperation in this matter.

We welcome with satisfaction the news that there are no more active Ebola cases in the region. In that regard, I would like to pay tribute to the national, subregional, regional and international actors that contributed to that achievement. At present, the task of rehabilitating essential services calls for our undivided attention. The epidemic has dramatically served to expose the fragility of national health systems and to highlight the importance of effective governance. Its repercussions will continue to be felt in the form of secondary fatalities due to inadequate capacities and loss of livelihoods, which have compounded an economic crisis in countries already severely affected by the decline in commodity prices.

I salute the resilience of the people of West Africa in overcoming adversity, and their commitment to uphold democratic principles. I want to assure members that UNOWA will not relent in supporting their efforts towards enhanced democracy and sustainable development. In the light of the support of the Security Council, which has consistently contributed to our engagement, I am confident that the United Nations will continue to remain a most relevant partner to the countries and institutions of the West African region.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Chambas for his briefing.

I now invite the Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.